

Message Text

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11

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 AGR-05 COME-00 IO-11 SP-02

AID-05 NSC-05 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01

CEA-01 CIAE-00 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 XMB-02

OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 /103 W

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R 231852Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5904

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USUN NEW WORK 1243

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRUSSELS 738

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TAGS: EFIN, EAID, BE

SUBJECT: CURRENT BELGIAN POSITION ON INTERNATIONAL FUND
FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (IFAD)

REF: 75 STATE 300294, BRUSSELS 277

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1. SUILLAUME METTEN, OFFICIAL IN SPECIAL FOREIGN MINISTRY

CABINET WHICH OVERSEES OPERATION OF BELGIAN ADMINISTRATION GENERALE DE LA COOPERATION AU DEVELOPPEMENT (AGCD), HAS PROVIDED EMBASSY WITH SOME SPECIFICS ON BELGIUM'S CURRENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS IFAD.

2. METTEN SAID THAT BELGIUM STILL HOPES FRENCH WILL DROP THEIR RESERVATIONS NEXT MONTH, TO ALLOW A JOINT EC CONTRIBUTION TO IFAD. BELGIUM WILL PARTICIPATE IN ANY EVENTUALITY, BUT GOVERNMENT CAN PROBABLY GET LARGER CONTRIBUTION BY PARLIAMENT UNDER COVER OF JOINT EC PROGRAM THAN IT WOULD PROBABLY CARE TO PROPOSE ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS.

3. METTEN CAUTIONED THAT, AS LONG AS BELGIUM HOLDS OUT HOPE FOR COMMUNITY EFFORT, ITS ATTITUDE ON ONE OR ANOTHER DETAIL IF IFAD'S ESTABLISHMENT COULD BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE IF NECESSARY TO ACCOMMODATE ITS EC PARTNERS, PARTICULARLY FRANCE. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, BELGIUM IS IN FULL ACCORD WITH ALL POINTS OF THE OECD CONSENSUS AS CHARACTERIZED REFTEL. ITS ONLY QUESTION (AND IT IS A MINOR ONE) IS BASIS FOR THE 17.5 PERCENT FIGURE FOR EQUAL VOTE DISTRIBUTION IN GROUP A. FOREIGN MINISTRY IS NOT NECESSARILY CONTESTING THE FIGURE BUT WONDERES HOW IT WAS ARRIVED AT. CONCERNING SDR 1 BILLION TARGET, METTEN ACKNOWLEDGED ITS USEFULNESS AS "NEGOTIATING TACTIC" BUT EXPRESSED HOPE THAT U.S. WOULD BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ACCEPT SOMEWHAT LOWER FIGURE (PERHAPS AROUND ADR 800-900 MILLION) AS SUFFICIENT TO BEGIN FUND OPERATIONS. OTHERWISE, BELGIANS BELIEVE THAT ONE-THIRD RATHER THAN ONE-EIGHTH OF DUND'S RESOURCES SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR GRANTS TO THE NEEDIEST LDCS.

4. AS FOR BELGIAN CONTRIBUTION TO IFAD, IT WILL BE MINIMAL IN 1976. AGCD 1976 BUDGET NOT YET APPROVED BY PARLIAMENT, SO NO FIGURES ARE YET PUBLIC. ON PRIVATE BASIS, METTEN INFORMED US THAT, DUE TO UNCERTAINTIES OF WHEN IFAD WILL BE ESTABLISHED, AND WHETHER EC WILL PARTICIPATE, BELGIAN 1976 BUDGET PROPOSED ONLY BF 25 MILLION FOR FUND. MEETEN SAID THAT IF EC ULTIMATELY AGREES TO MATCH U.S. CONTRIBUTION, BELGIAN SHARE WOULD PROBABLY JUMP TO AROUND BF 475 MILLION OVER NEXT TWO YEARS. FIRESTONE

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